

## CHAPTER FIFTEEN

# FOOD SECURITY IN NIGERIA

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### Introduction

At the World Food Conference in 1974, food security was viewed solely from the perspective of having adequate availability of food on a national scale (Adebayo, 2010). Hence, Food security was defined by World Food Conference as “availability at all times of adequate world supplies of basic food-stuffs” (United nations, 1975). Today World Bank proposed a definition that broadened the emphasis from food availability to include access to food, and narrowed the focus from the global and national to households and individuals (Orefi, 2012). It refers to equitable provision of food to points of demand at the right time and place. For Nigeria to be food secured, residents in every part of the country must have food all year-round (Okolo, 2004).

Food Security therefore according to Adebayo (2010) exists at both macro and micro levels. The macro level is the ability of a nation to provide food enough to feed its population either through production or import foods (food aid). This can be referred to as the National food Security (NFS) (Adebayo, 2010). This does not guarantee individual citizenry adequate access to such food. Their adequate access could be hindered by weak market, inequality in income distribution among others. The micro aspect of food security is the household and individual food security. A country may be food secured at the national level, but still have local pockets of food insecurity, at various periods

of the agricultural cycle (IFSS, 2002). A country is said to be food secured when all her people have access to sufficient food at all times for active and healthy life (World Bank, 1986). Aggregate Household Food Security Index (AHFSSI) by the United Nation's Food and Agricultural Organization and the Food Security Index (FSI) of the United State agency for International Development (USAID) are some of the composite indices that have been developed to measure Food Security.

### Components of Food Security

There are four different but inter-related dimensions to food security as itemized by Adebayo, (2010).

1. *Food Availability:* The effective and continuous supply of food at both national and household level. A food secured country must have food available to her citizens in appropriate quality and sufficient quantity. This is a function of food production. Food could be supplied through domestic production or imports (food aid). Food must be available in the right place at the right time in the right quality. It must also be noted that this is not synonymous to food security but is an important part of food security. This depends largely on input and output market condition and production capacities of the agricultural sector.
2. *Food Accessibility:* This depends on income levels and its distribution (Adebayo, 2010). Individual citizen must possess adequate resources, be it monetary or traditional rites to acquire appropriate food.
3. *Food Utilization:* This includes procurement, ingestion and digestion all of which are dependent on nutritional quality, education and health (Tollens, 2000). It includes the consumption of safe and nutritious food. Food security includes both food input and non-food inputs such as health care, sanitation, clean water. One who gets adequate quantity of food must also be able to make use of quite a commensurable quantity. A country whose citizens are unable to utilize the quantity of food available because of frequent ailment has not yet attained food security.
4. *Stability of Access:* Food security is determined by the ability to preserve or store produced food. This refers to stability of supply over time. Available food could be supplemented through import if necessary. Due to inefficient harvesting, processing and storage techniques which result to heavy post-harvest losses supply of food in Nigeria are unstable (Adebayo, 2010).

### Food Security Status in Nigeria

The food security status of Nigeria will be viewed from the standpoint of demand, supply, food importation, food prices, GNP per capita and per capita calorie intake. As reported by Egbutah, (2009) and Adebayo, (2010). Nigeria's domestic food production though increased annually falls short of food demand. The nation's food supply has therefore been supplemented with food import to meet demand. Nigeria's reliance on import as a means of solving her food shortage problems lowers farmer's prices and has a long term adverse effect on local production and foreign exchange (Egbutah, 2009). There has been gains in aggregate indices of agricultural and food production with a corresponding

sluggish growth in per caput food production and the quantity of food produced and the quality of food as a result of population growth. Nigeria therefore depends on food imports (Samusi *et al.*, (2006) and Orefe, (2006) about 18% in 1986 to about 41% in 2006.

### Agricultural Policies in Nigeria

Three distinct agricultural policy eras have been witnessed in Nigeria. The first era between 1946 and 1960 was characterized by a policy of import substitution. The second era beginning from 1960 till 1983 was characterized by a policy of import substitution and active role in facilitating and promoting agricultural development. The third beginning from 1985 till 2006 was characterized by a policy era witnessed an unprecedented growth in Nigerian Agriculture. A number of policies were implemented to increase food production and these include National Livestock Production Policy, National Fish Production Commission, National Public Funds. The post 1984 era was characterized by the Structural Adjustment Programme (SAP). The factor that led to the SAP programme reversed the agricultural policy. The SAP philosophy was that the government playing the role of a facilitator. Farmers were allowed to play a dominant role in the economy. There was more emphasis on development of the private sector. Broadening of the productive base of the economy. It should be noted that the SAP was basically deflationary and aimed at reducing the government's role in the economy.

Successive governments have tried to alleviate food insecurity, so as to stimulate the awareness of the need for food. Basin Development Authority (BDA) was established to develop water bodies through irrigation, flood, water pollution and erosion control. The Green Revolution aimed at enhancing the technical and scientific knowledge in the agricultural sub-sector. The objective of the Green Revolution aimed at offering a practical and innovative low cost approach to increase productivity and sustainability of contributing to better livelihoods. The National Fadama Development Project aimed at addressing some of the problems of the rural areas and of the potential benefit of agricultural development.



sluggish growth in per caput food production. There is a large gap between actual food produced and the quantity that is available for supply which could be as a result of population growth and high post-harvest losses (Adebayo, 2010). Nigeria therefore depends on food import to meet food demand. According to Sanusi *et al.*, (2006) and Orefi, (2012) food insecurity in Nigeria rose from about 18% in 1986 to about 41% in 2004.

### Agricultural Policies in Nigeria

Three distinct agricultural policy era in can be identified in Nigeria. These include- the first era between 1960 and 1969, the second, 1970-1984, and the third beginning from 1985 till present. In the first era, the government played active role in facilitating and supporting agricultural activities. The 1970-84 policy era witnessed an unprecedented increase in the number of parastatals in Nigerian Agriculture. A number of them were set up to be involved in direct food production and these include the National Grain Production Company, the National Livestock Production Company, the Nigerian Food Company, and the National Fish Production Company. By and large, these have been a waste of public funds. The post 1984 era witnessed the period of Structural Adjustment Programme (SAP). The factors that led to the institution of the SAP in 1986 actually started to manifest in the 1970-84 policy era. The Structural Adjustment Programme reversed the agricultural development philosophy of the earlier era. The SAP philosophy was that agriculture is essentially a private sector with the government playing the role of a facilitator and supporter. The market forces were allowed to play a dominant role in directing the economy. SAP also placed more emphasis on developmental role of agriculture as it emphasized a broadening of the productive base of the economy and reducing dependence on petroleum. It should be noted that the overall macroeconomics policies of SAP were basically deflationary and belt-tightening.

Successive governments have come up with different policies and programs to alleviate food insecurity, some of which include; Operation Feed the Nation. Stimulating the awareness of the masses towards food production; The River Basin Development Authority aimed at harnessing the potential of existing water bodies through irrigation services, fishery development and control of flood, water pollution and erosion; Agricultural Development Projects aimed at enhancing the technical and economic efficiencies of small-scale farmers; Green Revolution aimed at accelerating the achievement of the general agricultural sub-sector objectives; the National Special Food Security program, aimed at offering a practical vehicle for piloting and extending the application of innovative low cost approaches both technical and institutional to improving the productivity and sustainability of agricultural system with the ultimate objective of contributing to better livelihoods for poor farmers on a sustainable basis and the National Fadama Development Projects (Fadama II and III) which were aimed at addressing some of the factors that militate against the full realization of the potential benefit of agricultural production activities. (Orefi, 2012).

**Operation Feed the Nation:** Operation Feed the Nation (OFN) was introduced by the former head of state and president, Olusegun Obasanjo in 1976. It was saddled with the responsibility of increasing the food production capacity of the nation and to tackle nutritional challenges among Nigerians; and secondly to increase the engagement of youths in agriculture, facilitating knowledge sharing from institutions of higher learning to sites of food production, the farmland.

**Agricultural Development project (ADP):** Following the 1962-1968 national development plans, ADP was launched in 1972 to increase food production, and to raise the income of small-scale farmers. The experiment which began with Funtua (1974), Gusau (1974) and Gombe (1974) blossomed into having one ADP in each state of the country including the federal capital territory Abuja. ADP system had been rated the most viable Agricultural Development initiative in Nigeria. But today it is sad to note that ADPs have become shadows of their past. Auta and Dafwang, (2010) have attributed cause of this poor performance to include poor funding, inadequate staffing and lack of support from the Government. They documented that 63.6% of the ADPs have weak or very weak funding status.

**Green Revolution:** The Green Revolution programme was introduced in April 1980 by formal president Shehu Shagari to succeed operation feed the nation. It was intended to ensure self-sufficiency in food production and to introduce modern technology into the Nigerian agricultural sector, largely through the introduction of modern inputs such as high yielding varieties of seeds, fertilizers and tractors. The programme encompassed a wide range of projects supportive to the nation's agricultural development. This included 11 River Basin Development Authorities, the Ministry of Water Resources, National Food Production Programme, and the Agro Service centers. Improving rice and fish production was a major focus of the programme. However, the project suffered some setbacks in states governed by leaders opposed to Shagari's political party and also provisions to motivate big time farmers to make large scale investment were met with mixed results as a result of the Land Use Decree. The same provisions were also criticized as creating growth opportunities for wealthy investors without relief for small farmers.

**River Basin Development Authorities (RBDA):** RBDA was established to harness the nation's water resources and optimise its agricultural resources for food sufficiency. The RBDAs include; Upper Benue Basin, the Lake Chad Basin, Benin-Owena Basin, Sokoto-Rima Basin, Sokoto; Hadejia-Jema'a Basin, Kano; Maiduguri; the , Yola; the Lower Benue Basin, Makurdi and the Cross River Basin, Calabar, Oshun-Ogun Basin, Abeokuta. Anambra-Imo Basin, Owerri; the Niger Basin, Ilorin; and Niger Delta Basin, Port Harcourt. Instructively, the RBDAs were primarily established to provide water for irrigation and domestic water supply, improvement of navigation, hydro-electric power generation, recreation facilities and fisheries projects. The basins were also expected to engender big plantation farming and encourage the

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establishment of industrial complexes that could bring the private and public sectors in joint business partnership.

Additionally, RBDAs were expected to bridge the gap between the rural and urban centres by taking development to the grass roots and discourage migration from the rural areas to the urban centres. These objectives were to be achieved through surface impoundment of water by constructing small, medium and large dams, which would enable all-year round farming activities in the country. The responsibility of managing the agency was supposed to be shared between the federal, state and local governments, but that has not been the case, as the apex government singularly funds it, thereby leading to inefficiency. 'We have most projects that are always delayed because of the misappropriation of funds. More also, frequent change in policy has been identified to be frustrating the efforts of the agency. **National Special Programme on Food Security (NSPFS):** (NSPFS) was launched in January 2002, with the objective of increasing food production and eliminating rural poverty. The ultimate goal of the NSPFS is to refine local farming practices through the application of modern techniques, so that the peculiar problems faced by local farmers are subsequently addressed. With a total budget of \$45.2million, the Programme was to be executed over a five-year period. The NSPFS aims at improving food security both at national and household levels by employing a strategy that reduces variations in yearly production, sustains production in an economically and environmentally friendly way and improves the overall access to food.

The NSPFS comprises six main components: Special Security Project (SSP), Aquaculture and Inland Fisheries Project (AIFP), Animal Disease and Trans-boundary Pest Control Project (ADTPCP), Marketing of Agricultural Commodities and Food Stock Management Project (MACFSMP), Soil Fertility Initiative (SFI) and the South-South Cooperation (SSC). The NSPFS deals squarely with problems faced by Nigeria's rural farmers and those who farm near urban centres (the semi-urban farmers). To ensure the participation of these farmers in the Programme, they have been convinced that it introduces new agricultural methods from which they can benefit tremendously. This approach has necessitated a participatory process through which the farmers are directly introduced to new technologies that would improve their crop production and subsequent earnings. To ensure the success of the above approach, a number of activities were put in place. They include: Making sure that farmers benefit from relevant research, extension services and up-to-date technologies; Concentrating initial efforts on experimental projects so as to maximize results and set standards that can easily be replicated; Accessing and improving agricultural methods used internationally; Concluding other external loan-assisted programmes and projects so as to make room for new projects; Consolidating the gains from other ongoing programmes and projects; Taking advantage of Government efforts to introduce simple technologies that can boost production in small-scale, rain-fed and irrigation farming; Training farmers to effectively utilise available land, water and other resources and facilities and Deploying key international farming practices to local farmers.

The NSFPS comprises six main components: Special Security Project (SSP), Aquaculture and Inland Fisheries Project (AIFP), Animal Disease and Transboundary Pest Control Project (ADTPCP), Marketing of Agricultural Commodities and Food Stock Management Project (MACFSMP), Soil Fertilizing Initiative (SFI) and the South-South Cooperation (SSC).

As demonstrated by Dauda and Ajayi (2009) the performance of the NSFSP was high in the following components; farm intensification, water management, diversification, fisheries, and crop management based on the performance indices. Finally, four problems were declared as serious to the successful implementation of the NSFSP in Benue State. These problems were language barrier in the south-south cooperation, untimely release of funds, lack of means of transportation and untimely supply of inputs.

The National Fadama Development Programme (NFDP) was to assist the qualifying states of the Federation through the World Bank supported Agricultural Development Programmes (ADP) network to, among others, finance the provision of shallow tube wells in Fadama lands for small scale irrigation, simplifying drilling technologies for shallow tube wells; constructing fadama infrastructures; organizing Fadama farmers for irrigation management, cost recovery and better access to credit marketing and other services; and providing vehicle, pumps and other equipment. It is believed that the provision of this facility should not only boost agricultural production but also enhance the income of the farmers and thereby lift them out of the vicious circle of poverty. The facility was enabled in the 1995/96 cropping year. (Adeolu and Taiwo, 2004)

The National Fadama Program has some positive impact on the participating farmers. For instance, in Osun State of Nigeria, the programme has been adjudged to have increased the asset base of the participants, increased their income by about three times, enhanced access to farm inputs and increased the training and knowledge base of participants in low-land irrigation farming. The programme also ensured a high level of technical efficiency of the participants. These results suggest that the programme has a positive impact on the participants and has a wide potential of alleviating rural poverty in the area. The ability of the farmers to participate in other non-farming activities is enhanced by their enhanced access to credit facilities. However there is a recent report on difficulty in obtaining farm inputs by the fadama farmers. (Adeolu and Taiwo, 2004)

### Problem of Food Security in Nigeria

Any factor that constrains Agriculture, food production, food supply and food demand either directly or indirectly invariably affects food security. On the side of agriculture and food production the following have been identified.

1. Inadequate Supply of Farm Inputs;
2. Inadequate Extension Services;
3. Inadequate social Infrastructure;
4. Low Level of Education;

5. Poor Government
6. Inconsistent Policy
7. Civil and Religious
8. Economic Decline
9. Insecured land
10. Labour scarcity
11. Stagnant technology
12. Nature of farm
13. Inability of farmers to respond to incentives;
14. Climate change
15. Population density
16. Ownership of agricultural

On the side of supply and demand, food security include:

1. Poor post-harvest handling
2. Primitive storage facilities
3. Civil and Religious
4. Inadequate

On the other hand, the following are highlighted by Adeolu and Taiwo (2004):

1. Distribution of food
2. High food prices
3. Preference for imported food
4. Socio-cultural

### Strategies for Food Security

The following are the strategies for food security and food production:

1. Appropriate technology to improve productivity through low-cost production
2. The promotion of small-scale farmers notwithstanding the fact that farmers' income is not always guaranteed
3. Policies that encourage the production of small-scale waste and by-products
4. Nigeria's food security strategy trains young people and promotes entrepreneurship



5. Poor Governance;
6. Inconsistent Policies;
7. Civil and Religious Crisis;
8. Economic Deregulation;
9. Insecured land tenure;
10. Labour scarcity;
11. Stagnant technology;
12. Nature of farm organization;
13. Inability of the traditional farming system to provide adequate incentive;
14. Climate change;
15. Population dynamics; and
16. Ownership of productive assets and resources which are biased against agricultural producers.

On the side of supply, factors hampering food output and availability hence food security include:

1. Poor post-harvest handling during storage and poor road network;
2. Primitive state of marketing infrastructures and mechanisms;
3. Civil and Religious Crisis; and
4. Inadequate incentives;

On the other hand, the demand for food is affected by the following factors as highlighted by Adebayo, (2010).

1. Distributional structure of income/ agricultural resources;
2. High food prices;
3. Preference structure; and
4. Socio-cultural factors.

### Strategies for Improvement:

The following are recommended as strategies for improvement in agricultural and food production.

1. Appropriate technological and management innovations that will improve productivity and efficiency and reducing post-harvest losses through local processing;
2. The promotion of high-value and organic agricultural products, notwithstanding the fact that it serves a niche market, can boost farmers' earnings and potentially foreign exchange.
3. Policies should be designed to reduce the environmental footprint by encouraging waste conversion, use energy-efficient means of production and employ renewable energy from wind farms, solar, small-scale hydro and biomass. A reduction in non-biodegradable waste and storage materials can also be achieved.
4. Nigeria needs a programme devoted to a new generation of farmers that trains young educated people interested in agricultural entrepreneurship and provides financial and technological support. They should be enabled to use improved technologies and modern management

approaches that help ensure farm profitability and sustainable resource use.

5. The Land Use Act may need to be reviewed or strengthened to provide protection for the easy migration of farmers from heavily to sparsely populated areas of Nigeria. As competition for land increases, the government needs to provide secure tenure and access to land.
6. Increased investment and extension for irrigation facilities. Mechanized, irrigation farming and promotion of large processing outlets have been reported by Orefi, (2012) to have helped to ensure improved agricultural production in South Africa.
7. Improving the accessibility of the poor including women to productive resources such as land, technology and credit will pave way for food security.
8. Provision of adequate supporting physical infrastructures: These physical infrastructures include feeder roads, water, electricity and storage facilities. Nigeria's agriculture has the potential to carry out its roles if all these infrastructures are adequately provided. Provision of good storage facilities and mechanisms will stem the increase in food insecurity. Instituting an effective system of food reserves. Establishment of storage depots and processing units, enabling farmers to compete on the basis of standard and quality, this would also prevent post-harvest losses and ensured that many crops remained available when they are out of season;
9. Budget allocation to agriculture: It is absolutely important that State and Federal Governments should greatly increase their agricultural budgets. Actual releases must correspond to nominal budget allocations if the budget exercise is not to amount to grand deception. Timing of releases must be synchronized with farm field operations if the releases are to be effectively utilized.
10. Investment in human capital: Strategic investment in human capital for agricultural development is necessary to enhance literacy levels among Nigerian farmers. Such investment, in the immediate term, would improve farmers in numerate and verbal skills. In the long term, it would lead to a higher production level for farmers; as such have a direct effect on the number of researchers that can be used in agriculture.
11. Social and Environmental Protection: All facets- physical, economic, biological, geographical and institutional of agricultural environment must be adequately protected to sustain agricultural production. The multiplier effects of a disruption in any of these facets do not augur well for overall agricultural development.
12. Expansion of farm input: As documented by Dauda and Ajayi, (2009). Food and Agricultural organization has suggested an expansion of farm output, secondary agro-based trade and processing as the most attractive avenue for raising incomes and impressing livelihood and

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## Conclusion

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quality of life in rural areas where poverty is heavily concentrated (FGN/FAO, 2001).

The transportation of memos, inputs, and citizen feedback must be complete, going from administration to the implementation point and vice versa. The importance of transparency and rooting out corruption cannot be belaboured. Seasoned Farm Scientist and other experts should lead extension and training exercise. This task should not be completely delegated to students

### Conclusion

Some of the aforementioned programs put forward by the Government to combat the problem of food security has in no doubt increased food supplies but food accessibility and utilization is yet to improve and hence, the overall food security status of Nigeria worsened.

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### Introduction

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